AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (cancelled)

2. (cancelled)

3. (currently amended) A method ~~of claim 1 further~~ for modifying synthesized speech, the method including the steps of:

generating synthesized speech based on textual input and a plurality of run-time control parameter values;

generating real-time data based on background noise contained in an environment in which the speech is reproduced;

converting the background noise into an electrical signal;

retrieving one or more interface models from a model database; ~~and,~~

characterizing the background noise with the real-time data based on the electrical signal and the interface models; and,

modifying one or more of the run-time control parameter values based on the real-time data such that the intelligibility of the speech increases.

4. (original) The method of claim 3 further including the step of performing a time domain analysis on the electrical signal.

5. (original) The method of claim 3 further including the step of performing a frequency domain analysis on the electrical signal.

6. (original) The method of claim 3 wherein the characterizing step is selected from the group consisting essentially of the steps of:

identifying high level interference in the background noise;

identifying low level interference in the background noise;

identifying momentary interference in the background noise;

identifying continuous interference in the background noise;

identifying varying interference in the background noise;

identifying stationary interference in the background noise;

identifying spatial locations of sources of the background noise;

identifying potential sources of the background noise; and

identifying speech in the background noise.

7. (currently amended) The method of claim 3 ~~1~~ further including the steps of:

receiving the real-time data;

identifying relevant characteristics of the speech based on the real-time data, the relevant characteristics having corresponding run-time control parameters; and

applying adjustment values to parameters values of the control parameters such that the relevant characteristics of the speech change in a desired fashion.

8. (original) The method of claim 7 further including the step of changing relevant speaker characteristics of the speech.

9. (original) The method of claim 8 further including the step of changing relevant voice characteristics of the speech.

10. (original) The method of claim 9 further including the step of changing characteristics selected from the group consisting essentially of:

speech rate;

pitch;

volume;

parametric equalization;

formant frequencies and bandwidths;

glottal sources;

speech power spectrum tilt;

gender;

age; and,

identity.

11. (original) The method of claim 8 further including the step of changing relevant speaking style characteristics of the speech.

12. (original) The method of claim 11 further including the step of changing characteristics selected from the group consisting essentially of:

dynamic prosody; and,

articulation.

13. (original) The method of claim 7 further including the step of changing relevant emotion characteristics of the speech.

14. (original) The method of claim 13 further including the step of changing an urgency characteristic of the speech.

15. (original) The method of claim 7 further including the step of changing relevant dialect characteristics of the speech.

16. (original) The method of claim 15 further including the step of changing characteristics selected from the group consisting essentially of:

pronunciation; and,

articulation.

17. (original) The method of claim 7 further including the step of changing relevant content characteristics of the speech.

18. (original) The method of claim 17 further including the step of changing characteristics selected from the group consisting essentially of:

repetition;

redundancy; and

vocabulary.

19. (currently amended) The method of claim 3 ~~1~~ further including the step of using polyphonic audio processing to spatially reposition the speech based on the real-time data.

20. (currently amended) The method of claim 3 ~~1~~ further including step of inputting the run-time control parameter valves based on listener input.

21. (currently amended) The method of claim 3 ~~1~~ further including the step of using the synthesized speech in an automotive application.

22-30 (cancelled)